



# Washoe County Code Compliance

Planning & Building Division  
Community Services Department

## Land Use, Business License, and Nuisance Codes Common Complaints

This information sheet summarizes the most common types of code complaints received by the Planning & Building Division within the Community Services Department. Please contact the Division's compliance staff at 775.328.6106 or [Code-Enforcement@washoecounty.us](mailto:Code-Enforcement@washoecounty.us) for more information on any of these common complaints. Complaints may also be submitted on-line at the [ONE Regional Licensing and Permits Portal](#).

### NUISANCE REGULATIONS

The Division's Code Enforcement Officers (CEOs) are authorized to enforce certain nuisance regulations. These regulations include:

- Outdoor storage of junk vehicles, building material, and/or appliances, and/or debris in public view.

**Remedy:** All vehicles, material, appliances, and/or debris must be removed or screened from public view. Vehicles may also be registered with DMV and therefore not considered as a junk vehicle. Building material is allowed with a valid building permit. Screening must be at least 6 feet in height, and must provide both physical separation and visual obscuration on all sides and in all seasons.

**Notes:** Storage is a time period longer than 72 hours.

"Public view" means plainly visible from the public right-of-way. Items enclosed within a lawful screen (e.g., a fence) are not considered to be in public view.

Complaints about **solid waste, trash, refuse, rubbish and/or garbage** should be reported to the Health District on-line at the [ONE Regional Licensing and Permits Portal](#) or by phone at 775.328.2434.

- Maintenance of a property in such a state of disrepair or deterioration that could cause damage to other property or improvements, or cause or contribute to blight and a substantial reduction in the value of neighboring properties.

**Remedy:** The condition on the property must be remedied, rectified and/or removed.

**Note:** Often the nuisance conditions on these properties are more properly classified as another type of County Code violation. Code compliance staff should be contacted for more information.

- Excessive foliage and/or other nuisance conditions on the exterior of any foreclosed residential property.

**Remedy:** The foliage or nuisance condition on the property must be remedied, rectified and/or removed.

*Note:* This regulation applies only to foreclosed properties no longer in an individual's ownership.

## **LAND USE (ZONING) REGULATIONS**

The most prevalent land use (zoning) violations enforced by the CEOs include:

- Outdoor storage of a commercial vehicle and/or commercial equipment on a residentially zoned property.

*Remedy:* The commercial vehicle or commercial equipment must be removed from the property.

*Note:* Storage of a commercial vehicle or equipment on a residentially zoned property is a time period longer than 72 hours.

- Cargo and/or rental storage containers which do not meet placement and/or development standards, and/or permit requirements.

*Remedy:* Cargo containers permanently placed on a property must meet all Washoe County set back standards; obtain a building permit if over 200 square feet in size; are limited to 1 container on parcels less than 1/2 acre, 2 containers on parcels between 1/2 and 5 acres, and 1 container per acre on parcels greater than 5 acres and must be painted a solid, muted color that blends with the surrounding vegetation, structures, or topography. Cargo or rental storage containers temporarily placed on a property must meet development standard which limit the duration of the time they are allowed on the property. These standards include a time frame associated with a current, valid building permit, or a maximum of 60 days for a rental storage container.

*Note:* There are other requirements for cargo/storage containers in County Code. Code compliance staff should be contacted for more information.

- Living or sleeping in a recreational vehicle or travel trailer.

*Remedy:* A recreational vehicle, travel trailer, or fifth wheel trailer shall not be used for sleeping or as a dwelling.

*Notes:* Temporary camping is allowed, subject to a limited occupancy time period not to exceed 14 consecutive days for each visit and no more than 4 visits in a calendar year.

The RV may also be used as a temporary dwelling when there is a valid residential dwelling building permit issued for the property.

- Storage of an unoccupied manufactured or mobile home.

*Remedy:* The manufactured or mobile home must be removed from the property.

*Note:* Storage is a time period longer than 72 hours. The manufactured or mobile home does not have a valid set-up permit and is not connected to utilities.

## **BUILDING AND ENGINEERING REGULATIONS**

The most prevalent building and engineering violations enforced by the CEOs include:

- Constructing or erecting a building or structure over 200 square feet in size without the appropriate Washoe County building permit.

Remedy: The property owner or contractor must apply for and obtain a building permit.

*Note:* There are several types of building permits, depending on the work that has been done or will be done. Fees are also assessed for each type of building permit. Building Program staff should be contacted at 775.328.2020 for information on permits and fees.

- Any building or structure that is dangerous or in disrepair.

Remedy: The building or structure must be repaired and/or removed, in whole or in part.

*Note:* Often the repair or removal of a dangerous building or structure will require a demolition permit in addition to other required building permits. Building Program staff should be contacted at 775.328.2020 for information on permits and fees.

- Grading of land not authorized by County Code. Grading includes the import or export of earth material or fill in excess of 50 cubic yards.

Remedy: The property owner or contractor must apply for and obtain a grading permit.

*Note:* Grading permits are obtained from the Washoe County Building Program. The volume or amount of grading, export or import may also require a separate special use permit. Planning Program staff should be consulted at 775.328.6100 for information on thresholds for grading. Building Program staff should be contacted at 775.328.2020 for information on permits and fees.

- Drainage or storm water issues from one property onto another.

Remedy: Development on a property must not increase drainage or storm water flows off the property.

*Note:* Engineering Program staff should be consulted at 775.328.2041 for information on drainage or storm water issues. Other permits may be required to control or manage any such issues.

## **BUSINESS LICENSE REGULATIONS**

Business license code violations typically include:

- Operating a business in the unincorporated County without a valid Washoe County business license.

Remedy: The business must obtain a Washoe County business license.

*Note:* The license will not be issued until after all other required approvals, licenses and permits are obtained. This includes the Nevada business license, together with other State and County approvals.

- Violation of a home-based business license requirement or development standard.  
Remedy: Violation of any of the home-based business license requirements (e.g., emitting dust or gas) or development standards (e.g., outdoor storage of business material or several employees reporting to work at the home) is cause to suspend, revoke and/or not renew the license.  
*Note:* There are several requirements and development standards in County Code. Code compliance staff should be contacted for more information.

Frequently, the Division receives complaints on other types of County Code violations of which the CEOs have no authority to either investigate or enforce. The following complaints may be registered on-line at the [ONE Regional Licensing and Permits Portal](#) or by telephone at the number provided.

- Solid waste, trash, refuse, rubbish and/or garbage on a property (Health District at 775.328.2434).
- Vector problems (e.g., rodents or mosquitoes) on a property (Health District at 775.328.2434).

The following County agencies should be contacted directly by telephone at the number provided for the following complaints:

- Animals at large or noisy animals (Regional Animal Services at 775.322.3647).
- Junk vehicles on public roads (Sheriff's Office at 775.328-3001).
- Noise from off-road vehicles; or any off-road vehicle operating within 1,000 feet of a residence (Sheriff's Office at 775.328.3001).
- Trespassers on a foreclosed property (Sheriff's Office at 775.328.3001).
- Obstructing a public road or trail (Sheriff's Office at 775.328.3001).
- Overgrown vegetation or weeds (Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District at 775.326.6000 or North Lake Tahoe Fire Protection District at 775.831.0351).